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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 002057

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/24/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PE](#)
SUBJECT: HUMALA'S FRAUD CLAIMS STIR CONCERN OVER
POST-ELECTION DISTURBANCES

REF: LIMA 2039

Classified By: Polcouns Alexander Margulies. Reason: 1.4(d).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: Union por el Peru (UPP) candidate Ollanta Humala's warnings that his opponents may intend to engage in electoral fraud has raised concerns that the Humalistas plan to engage in disturbances and/or violence should the UPP standard-bearer lose the 6/4 presidential balloting. Electoral officials and the head of the OAS Observer Mission have dismissed the possibility of massive fraud, with the former challenging Humala to present evidence to support his allegations. Meanwhile, APRA party candidate Alan Garcia has tried to eke political mileage out of the claims, by characterizing them as an admission of defeat by Humala. While there were indications of some irregularities in APRA-dominated areas during the first round of voting, they were not enough to call into question Garcia's edging out Unidad Nacional's Lourdes Flores. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (U) Ollanta Humala, following his 5/21 debate with Alan Garcia (Ref A), issued a call to his supporters to volunteer as "personeros" (legal representatives) to observe the electoral process and counting of ballots at each of the 88,481 voting tables, warning that his opponents may intend to engage in electoral fraud. To support his stance, Humala cited Unidad Nacional (UN) presidential candidate Lourdes Flores' concession speech, in which she said that her defeat was, "at the voting tables, not at the ballot box," and UN congressman-elect Javier Bedoya's allegations of irregularities at some 1900 voting tables in northern coastal departments dominated by APRA.

¶3. (U) Electoral authorities were quick to counter Humala's claims. National Electoral Board (JNE) President Enrique Mendoza declared, "There was no and there will be no electoral fraud," and he challenged Humala to present evidence to back up his charges. Mendoza added that JNE is ready to respond promptly to investigate any evidence of fraud, added that his organization is issuing new credentials to electoral observers, and encouraged the UPP and APRA to train and station personeros at each voting table. Office of National Electoral Processes (ONPE) Magdalena Chu also rebutted Humala's fraud warning, noting that ONPE will closely monitor voting tables and will provide improved training to voting table officials. Meanwhile, OAS Observer Mission head Lloyd Axworthy, referring to the JNE and ONPE's second round preparations, said, "We have seen that they have made improvements for the second round and we are going to be

very vigilant."

¶4. (U) APRA party officials sounded the alarm that Humala's statement was intended to pave the way for post-election violence by his supporters, a theme that was echoed by political commentators. APRA co-Secretary General Mauricio Mulder noted that this fit in with the strategy followed by Humala's "godfather...Hugo Chavez." APRA presidential candidate Alan Garcia sought to gain additional political mileage from Humala's comments, by challenging his opponent to join him in agreeing to respect the election results, adding that Humala's claims of possible fraud are "unwarranted and malevolent," and reflect, "an anticipated confession of defeat and a low state of morale."

¶5. (C) In a 5/17 meeting with Emboffs, pro-democracy NGO Transparencia Secretary General Percy Medina said that his investigators had looked into the fraud allegations made by Unidad Nacional officials, and concluded that there were indeed highly questionable results recorded at up to 1900 voting tables in three northern coastal departments dominated by APRA. Specifically, he explained, the total votes for Lourdes Flores at these locations were much lower than at adjacent voting tables, while the votes recorded for minor candidates positioned next to Flores on the ballots and tally sheets were suspiciously high. Nonetheless, he concluded, the votes in question were not/not enough for Flores to have caught Garcia, although annulation of the results from these voting tables would have reduced Garcia's advantage by two-thirds, to about 20,000 votes.

¶6. (C) Humala's image consultant Alejandro Pucci, during a 5/24 lunch with Polcouns, said that the Humala camp was truly

concerned about the possibility that lower-level electoral authorities and APRA officials would collude in electoral fraud if given the opportunity. He added that the UPP is engaged in a furious effort to recruit and train enough personeros to ensure that it is represented throughout the country on election day, but especially in traditionally APRA areas.

¶7. (C) COMMENT: The possibility of massive electoral fraud in the presidential balloting is minute, given the safeguards built into the system and the presence of a sizable number of international observers. That said, should the vote difference between the two candidates be extremely close, we can expect either or both sides to cry "foul." END COMMENT.
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